



**State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

**Willis W. Sullivan Papers,
1838-1864, bulk 1841-1847**

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:

Sullivan, Willis W., ca. 1805-1850

Inclusive Dates:

1838-1864, bulk 1841-1847

Scope & Content:

The Willis W. Sullivan Papers are comprised almost entirely of land deeds and indentures transacted in Davidson County, Tennessee between 1838 and 1864. There are 29 land records (including 5 oversize ones housed separately) detailing land transfers either to or from Sullivan with various residents of Davidson County. The deeds identify the parties involved, date of conveyance, locations of land parcels, and the amount of money paid for each parcel. Each land record is authorized, by signature and date, by the Clerk of the Davidson County Register Office. The land in question centers on streets in Nashville, Tennessee, such as Charlotte Turn Pike and Broad Street, as well as parcels along the portions of the Big Harpeth River in Davidson County.

Two oversize deeds document the transfer of land from Vernon K. Stevenson (1812-1884) to Willis Sullivan. V. K. Stevenson was the founder and first president of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.

The collection also contains six slave transfer records from 1841 to 1845 detailing Sullivan's purchase of slaves. The records contain the names of the slaves (and sometimes age), the parties involved in the transaction, the date of conveyance, and the amount of money paid for each slave.

These papers include two hand-drawn maps detailing boundaries of land parcels, and one piece of personal correspondence from J. Rothiock to Henry Hutton inquiring as to a boy's (possibly a slave) whereabouts. In a letter dated October

12, 1846, Rothiock inquires as to “what has become of young Charlton. The time has long since past that I expected him to be here...I am now in need of a boy-if you know any thing about him please write to me...”

The records in this collection contain valuable information about the nature of and economic attitudes toward slavery and the slave trade in Davidson County, Tennessee, and land and real-estate development patterns in Nashville in the 1840s.

Physical Description/Extent:

38 items

Accession/Record Group Number:

Ac. No. 1995-047

Language:

English

Permanent Location:

I-C-2; I-C-top (oversize folder)

Repository:

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

Administrative/Biographical History

Willis W. Sullivan (ca. 1805-1850) was born in North Carolina and was the son of Levi Sullivan; his mother's name is unknown. Willis married Martha Ann Porch (1817-1880) of Virginia, daughter of Thomas Porch and Martha Patsey Booth, on October 8, 1835, in Davidson County, Tennessee. The couple had four daughters: Florence, Palestine, Josephine, and Virginia.

A large cholera epidemic broke out in Nashville in the summer of 1850, and Willis W. Sullivan died in July 1850 after battling the disease for one week. Martha continued to live in her Ward 6 home in Nashville, Tennessee, until her death in 1880.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

The items are organized alphabetically by type of document, then chronologically within each category. The oversize documents are arranged chronologically.

Conditions of Access and Use

Restrictions on Access:

None

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

While the Tennessee State Library and Archives houses an item, it does not necessarily hold the copyright on the item, nor may it be able to determine if the item is still protected under current copyright law. Users are solely responsible for determining the existence of such instances and for obtaining any other permissions and paying associated fees that may be necessary for the intended use.

Index Terms

Personal Names:

Stevenson, Vernon K., 1812-1884

Sullivan, Willis W., ca. 1805-1850

Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

Davidson County (Tenn.). Register of Deeds

Subjects:

Davidson County (Tenn.) -- History.

Land titles -- Registration and transfer -- Tennessee.

Slave records -- Southern States.

Slavery -- Tennessee.

Geographic Names:

Davidson County (Tenn.)

Harpeth River (Tenn.)

Nashville (Tenn.)

Document Types:

Deeds

Maps

Personal correspondence

Acquisition and Appraisal

Provenance and Acquisition:

These records were donated to the Tennessee State Library and Archives by Kathleen Calvert of Nashville, Tennessee in May 1995.

Processing and Administrative Information

Preferred Citation:

Willis W. Sullivan Papers, 1838-1864, Tennessee State Library and Archives

Processing Information:

Processing completed by Rachel K. Morris, September 2012. These items were lightly surface cleaned. As no original order existed, they were arranged alphabetically by type of document, then chronologically within each category. The oversize materials were placed in an oversize folder and arranged chronologically.

Electronic Location and Access:

<http://www.tn.gov/tsla/history/manuscripts/findingaids/95-047.pdf>

DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Correspondence -- J. Rothiock to Henry Hutton	Oct. 12, 1846	1	1
Deeds -- Richard Savage to Willis W. Sullivan	Nov. 16, 1841	1	2
Deeds -- John Nelson to William Harris	Dec. 8, 1841	1	3
Deeds -- Huston Cooper to Henry M. Hutton; Thomas H. Ferebee to Henry M. Hutton; William Greer to Henry Hutton (3 items)	Oct. 17, 1842	1	4
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to W. B. Smith	June 29, 1843	1	5
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to Felix Rives and Albert Rives	Nov. 29, 1843	1	6
Deeds -- Alfred G. Parson to Willis W. Sullivan	June 11, 1844	1	7
Deeds -- John Bosly to Willis W. Sullivan	Sept. 19, 1844	1	8
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to Robert T. Moore	Nov. 9, 1844	1	9
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to Anderson Lumpkins; Robert T. Moore to Willis W. Sullivan; Robert T. Moore to Willis W. Sullivan (3 items)	Jan. 1, 1845	1	10
Deeds -- Simpson M. Murry and W. C. M. Murry to Willis W. Sullivan	June 18, 1845	1	11
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to Lewis Days	Aug. 19, 1846	1	12
Deeds -- B. H. Sheppard to Willis W. Sullivan; Henry White and James White to Willis W. Sullivan (2 items)	Sept. 22, 1846	1	13
Deeds -- H. M. Hutton to Willis W. Sullivan	Dec. 4, 1846	1	14
Deeds -- John T. Henderson to Willis W. Sullivan	Sept. 1, 1847	1	15
Deeds -- G. W. Lincoln to Willis W. Sullivan	Sept. 2, 1847	1	16
Deeds -- Willis W. Sullivan to Richard McCann	Jan. 1, 1849	1	17
Deeds -- Deed petition of H. L. Porch v. Martha Sullivan and heirs of Willis W. Sullivan	May 18, 1851	1	18
Deeds -- Martha Sullivan, et al. to Virginia Sullivan, et al.	June 18, 1856	1	19
Deeds -- J. T. Lyons on behalf of Mrs. Martha Sullivan to Adam Smith (freeman)	Sept. 6, 1864	1	20
Maps -- William S. Miller land map; Land map (2 items)	undated	1	21
Slave Transfers -- Of Charity from Felix R. Rains to Willis W. Sullivan	Mar. 27, 1841	1	22

Slave Transfers -- Of [Datie?] from Isaac Pierce to Willis W. Sullivan	Oct. 20, 1841	1	23
Slave Transfers -- Of Elizabeth from Jesse Jordan to Willis W. Sullivan	Sept. 18, 1843	1	24
Slave Transfers -- Of Hannah from H. R. Rains to Willis W. Sullivan	Oct. 7, 1843	1	25
Slave Transfers -- Of One Slave and Personal Property from John Cartwright to Willis W. Sullivan	Mar. 16, 1844	1	26
Slave Transfers -- Of Isabel from Thomas Casey and John D. Casey to Willis W. Sullivan	Jan. 18, 1845	1	27

Contents/Item Title	Date	Folder
Deeds -- Raca Hows to Willis W. Sullivan	Jan. 24, 1838	Oversize folder
Deeds -- Isaac Paul and James M. Murrell to Willis W. Sullivan	Nov. 19, 1840	Oversize folder
Deeds -- William Ellison to Henry M. Hutton	Oct. 17, 1842	Oversize folder
Deeds -- V. K. Stevenson to Willis W. Sullivan	July 5, 1845	Oversize folder
Deeds -- V. K. Stevenson to Willis W. Sullivan	Sept. 22, 1846	Oversize folder